

In The Claims:

Please amend Claims 1-11, and 13-16 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush, wherein the tufting holes formed in the a tufting part are [almost elliptic] or [almost rectangular] and the tufting holes are inclined, in directions perpendicular to lengthwise directions of the handle length, toward the a tufting surface so as to have tufts implanted therein support one another.

2. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 1, wherein the a lengthwise direction of the tufting holes is along the direction of handle length.

3. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 1 or ~~Claim 2~~, wherein there is at least one group of tufting holes that form a pair inclined to the an inside.

4. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 1 or ~~Claim 2~~, wherein inclination in from a vertical direction of inclined tufting holes is 2 to 10°.

5. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 1 or ~~Claim 2~~, wherein monofilaments that form the tufts to be implanted in the tufting holes have a rectangular cross section, the a direction of the a long side of this cross section being along the lengthwise direction of the tufting holes.

6. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 1 or

~~Claim 2~~, wherein there ~~is~~ are a plurality of converging blocks of a pair of ~~2~~ two tufts facing and supporting one another.

7. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 1 or ~~Claim 2~~, wherein ~~the~~ an end portion of each tuft that has been implanted is worked into a V-shape.

8. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 6, wherein converging blocks are at least at ~~the~~ a front or ~~the~~ a back in the lengthwise direction of ~~the~~ a tufting base.

9. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to Claim 6, wherein ~~the~~ a next row of converging blocks is positioned behind ~~the~~ a space that is formed between converging blocks in ~~the~~ a front row in the direction of handle length.

10. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to ~~Claim 1~~ or ~~Claim 2~~ any one of Claims 1 through 9, wherein an anchor that is driven into ~~the~~ a tufting base in ~~the~~ a folded part of a tuft that has been folded in ~~the~~ a center in its lengthwise direction is driven into the tufting hole so that it is almost parallel to ~~the~~ a long side or ~~the~~ a short side of the tufting hole and ~~the~~ an opening surface area of the tufting hole is divided into two equal parts in order to embed and support ~~the~~ said tufts in the tufting hole.

11. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to ~~Claim 1~~ or ~~Claim 2~~ 10, wherein ~~the~~ said anchor is positioned $\pm 10^\circ$ with

09/674,931

respect to ~~the~~ a center line along ~~the~~ a lengthwise direction of the said tufting hole.

12. (Original) A toothbrush according to Claim 11, wherein the centers of the tufting holes are not lined up on one straight line in the direction of handle length.

13. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to ~~Claim 1 or~~
~~Claim 2~~ any one of the Claims 1 through 9 wherein tufting holes account for 10 to 30 mm in ~~the~~ a direction of handle length and 5 to 15 mm in ~~the~~ a direction of handle width.

14. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to any + one of Claims 1 through ~~13~~ 9, wherein the tufting holes are almost rectangular and ~~the~~ a short side of these almost rectangular tufting holes has dimensions of 0.8 to 2.0 mm, while ~~the~~ a long side has dimensions of 1.5 to 5.0 mm.

15. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to ~~Claim 2~~ any one of Claims 2 through 9, ~~where the~~ wherein a distance at ~~the~~ a base between the tufts that form a pair and make up the converging blocks is 0.2 to 4.0 mm.

16. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush according to ~~Claim 6~~ any one of Claims 6 through 9, wherein there are 5 five rows of tufts in the lengthwise direction of the tufting base, with ~~Rows 1 rows~~ one and 5 five forming one converging block in ~~the~~ a center in ~~the~~ a direction of width of ~~the~~ a tufting base, ~~Rows 2 rows~~ two and 4

09/674, 931

four forming ~~2~~ two converging blocks on either side sandwiching the center in the direction of width of the tufting base, and ~~Row 3~~ row three forming one converging block at the center in the direction of width of the converging block, and there is ~~1~~ one independent tuft, each inclined so that it is in the same direction as the tufts that form the said converging blocks, but its end portion does not touch the converging blocks, to the an outside of the said converging blocks.